

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T AMMAN 000581

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [EG](#) [SA](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: MUASHER ON ARAB INITIATIVE, TUNIS SUMMIT,
PALESTINIAN PARALYSIS

Classified By: Amb. Edward W. Gnehm for reasons 1.5 (b) (d)

SUMMARY

1. (S) FonMin Muasher told the Ambassador that he is trying to revive the Arab initiative for the upcoming Arab summit in Tunis and wants to add an element of public diplomacy outreach to Israelis, but has found little interest from the Saudis or Egyptians in moving in this direction. He plans follow up trips to Riyadh and Cairo in the next two weeks. He expects that many Arab heads of state will not attend the upcoming Arab summit in Tunis. He described a state of total paralysis in the Palestinian leadership, and said that PM Abu Alaa is unable to take any action, and other senior PNA officials are seeking outside Arab help to get HAMAS/PIJ agreement to a ceasefire. END SUMMARY.

LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR JORDANIAN MEPP INITIATIVE...

2. (S) Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher told the Ambassador and PolCouns January 21 that he is "trying to do something" to reinvigorate the roadmap. He said Jordan is seeking "a proactive Arab role" that revives the Arab initiative and includes direct outreach to the Israeli public. He had discussed this with the Saudis and Egyptians in Cairo this week, and planned trips January 26 to Riyadh and the next week to Cairo to follow up.

3. (S) During discussions on Muasher's ideas, Saudi FonMin Prince Saud had suggested "registering" the Arab initiative with the UN. Muasher explained that Jordan would support such a move, but also wanted to take Arab activities into the sphere of public diplomacy. Prince Saud, Muasher related, seemed to indicate that "the Saudis are not ready to deal directly with Israel." Egyptian FonMin Ahmed Maher was "more interested, but not too much" in the idea. There was a general consensus in Cairo that "the situation is terrible and something has to be done." However, there was no agreement on what to do.

... OR THE ARAB SUMMIT IN TUNIS

4. (S) Muasher said that there is also little enthusiasm for the upcoming Arab summit in Tunis, and that the Tunisians are having trouble nailing down the attendance of heads of state since most leaders are concerned the summit will either accomplish little or "cause a split." President Ben Ali apparently is worried lest he host a failed summit "in a re-election year for him."

PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP IN "TOTAL PARALYSIS"

5. (S) Muasher said he had recently spoken separately with Saeb Erekat and Nabil Shaath: both stressed the need for outside Arab support to achieve HAMAS/PIJ agreement to a ceasefire. "The Palestinian leadership is in total paralysis," Muasher commented. "They don't do much more than pay salaries." In Ramallah, police patrol in civilian clothes for fear of being arrested by Israel, and in Nablus and Janin "local militias," not the PNA, patrol the streets. Muasher also spoke with EGIS Director Omar Suleiman who said that Egypt sees little opportunity for progress and is focused now on preventing further deterioration of the situation. Suleiman told Muasher that he would try again to help Abu Alaa get a ceasefire from HAMAS and PIJ, but that he was not optimistic.

COMMENT

6. (S) Muasher was upbeat on his ideas to reinvigorate the Arab initiative and the roadmap despite the lukewarm reception in Cairo and Riyadh. We expect he will continue to plug away in private and take a back seat to the Saudis and Egyptians in public.

Visit Embassy Amman's classified website at

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/amman/>

or access the site through the State Department's SIPRNET
home page.

GNEHM